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BOSTON ART IN NEW YORK.

THE exhibition at the American Art Galleries in Madison Square of a collection of works all by Boston artists is the most notable event of the season. Most of the artists represented have been made pretty well known to New Yorkers by their contributions to the Academy and the Society of American Artists' exhibitions; but although it was seen that there was something peculiar about the Boston pictures, it could hardly, before now, be determined what it was. It now appears that the Bostonians constitute a school; that they do not hang on to any foreign school of Paris or Munich, nor aim to be cosmopolitan in their style; that they have the presumption to stand alone, and that the peculiar quality common to all their works, which has puzzled so many, is simply the expression of that serene self-confidence which never deserts a native of our sister city in any of his undertakings. In this case it is not at all misplaced. The score or so of painters who have ventured to paint American scenes and American people and to invent, so far as was necessary, their methods of working have no reason to repent their temerity. If their work is, here and there, a little weak or strained or affected, it has, in the main, the strength of a well-understood purpose and the quietness and reasonableness that accompany growing skill. We have in this little exhibition the beginning of an American school of painting.

It is easy to see that most of the men and women here represented are on the uphill track. There are in all about twenty five, which gives an average of about five works apiece. Enough to show the fluctuations of strength and of endeavor that accompany progress. Unevenness of the kind here apparent is very different from the variations of despair or of deterioration. In the most slipshod, the most abortive of these works—and there are a few to which these adjectives can be applied—something has been accomplished which has not been done before so well. There is nothing here so bad that it is not for some reason worth exhibiting and preserving. Take Mr. Cole's "New England Farm," which will probably be the picture to be pounced upon most quickly by an adverse critic. It is a report, one may say, in almost illegible short-hand, of a phase of the quickly changing New England spring. Even if deciphered and written out plain it would prove to be the report of a novice, disjointed, contradictory, and incomplete. If here is a touch of spring atmosphere the rest of the picture is as arid as the Sahara in August. On one of these trees the spots of green are arranged with something like the playful orderliness of this most orderly of the seasons; on the others there are neither branches nor leaves, but a chaos of dark strokes and green blotches. Nevertheless, the few random touches of truth are so new, so unexpected, they are so evidently of the painter's own finding, that no one but a pedant will condemn his work. It is in great part childish, it is true, but everything new is of necessity childish. More skilful painters who would depict this scene as they have been taught to paint Bavarian landscapes seen through the bottom of a Bavarian beer glass, would hardly please as much. We do not care much for the consistency that is gained by eliminating all truth whatever.

Mr. Cole has several pictures to which no exception can be taken. His Abbajona River is a well and solidly painted work throughout. It is a good test of the landscape painter's skill that is afforded by such a subject, flat meadows with a shallow river between, and low hills at each side. Mr. Cole's meadows recede in true perspective, his river flows and the hills are properly modelled and keep their places. His picture of "Spring" is even better because in it he not only shows himself possessed of the skill that is absolutely required, but also of poetic feeling and of the higher kind of technique which that exacts. For it is a mistake to suppose that feeling may dispense with technique. On the contrary, it is quite dependent on technique for expression. This "Spring" is another river view, but with swelling green hills sloping to the water's edge. The sky is of an excellent pearly tint, and the river slightly rippling catches reflections from portions of the sky not in view, making a delicious harmony of grays. The blossoms of some young apple-trees strike another note of the same scale, but quite low and dull as is right on such a day. In handling they are also right, being painted with a firm, unaltered touch.

J. Appleton Brown paints apple-blossoms quite

otherwise, and not so well. In his "Month of May" the blossoms, pink and white, but not the correct pink and white, are soft and waxy in texture, and are blended into the sky in the Munich fashion, which is far from natural. The tone of the sky, too, is only an approximation to what the painter had in mind, and the water is painted with the same tint as the sky, merely muddled and darkened. There is little truth in the work if some of the vivid greens in the foreground are not true, and one can hardly be sure that they are, with everything false all around them. But as with Mr. Cole, so it is with Mr. Brown. The adverse judgment that one would be led to render, if he were to judge by certain examples of his work, is at once set aside when one sees certain others. Though mannered, his manner is so little set that it may be in one case execrable and in another very good. Mr. Brown has two very respectable paintings, "Twilight" and "A Cloudy Day." The "Twilight" recalls Daubigny, but it has more precision and is, in so far, of a better school than Daubigny's work.

John Enneking, who has several winter and autumn landscapes, is also a mannerist; but he comes very nigh escaping from himself in his large painting of October. The color here is very good, the modelling of the ground is passable; some cows in the foreground are too badly drawn even for use in a landscape.

Frederick Vinton has one small landscape, "Cernay la Ville," but it is good. So also are "Old Houses on the Dutch Coast," by Mr. Tuckerman, and several small marines by Geo. Wasson.

We now come to Mr. Fuller, of whom it was hoped that he would furnish the attraction of the exhibition. His "Dandelion Girl," the principal work shown, has been exhibited in New York before. It is a charming picture, very successful in its golden tone and mysterious effect of evening haze, but Mr. Fuller has painted better. Not however of late, apparently, for the three other examples from his brush are all distinctly worse. One is a mere sketch and may be passed over. A second is a large landscape in which the ever-recurring effect of golden haze is all in all. The third, a portrait, is very poor, lacking in drawing and modelling and missing even the usual tone. It is suspected that Mr. Fuller is keeping his best work for the Academy exhibition, where it will be sure to shine by contrast with its surroundings, as well as from its intrinsic merits, and so run a double chance of selling. If this is the case, the other members of the association should "taboo" him. In making this reconnaissance in force, Boston expected every man to do his duty.

The best portrait is that of T. S. Appleton, by Fred. P. Vinton. It is broadly and vigorously handled. A "Girl with Mandolin" by Mrs. F. C. Houston is more delicately painted, but quite strongly enough for the subject. The ladies have been given a very fair representation and have done themselves much credit. Beside Mrs. Houston's portrait—for such it is said to be—there is another ideal head of a female, apple-blossoms once more, this time a branch of them, and another little flower piece, a growing daffodil, all by members of the sex. Some well-painted pictures of still life complete the tale.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE, the California photographer who interviews all the crowned heads of art with his obstinate photographs of animals in motion, lectured before a highly interested audience at the Union League on January 9th. Droll it was to see how Herring's most ambitious racing horses, not to speak of Meissonier's cavalry and Rosa Bonheur's cattle, were set down by the plain tails and irrefutable legs of Muybridge's beasts, when they all galloped over the magic-lantern screen together. It appears that no artist has understood the proper alternation of the horse's legs, whether in a trot or gallop, from the Egyptians to the sculptor of the equestrian Marcus Aurelius, and from that often copied model down. The lecturer did not spare Mr. Brown, of our Union Square statue of Washington, for his horse, which, it appears, repeats the impossible attitude of the horse of Marcus Aurelius. Strange to say, the Colleoni statue at Venice, the original of Durer's "Knight and Death" was not shown. It is odd that artists of Egypt, Assyria, Greece, Rome, and modern nations have all made the same mistakes in representing equine motion, mistakes now indisputably proved by mechanically perfect records of the real

thing. The only nation keen enough to correct the blunders of ages is found to be the native American—the sketches of horses in motion on a bit of buffalo-skin presented to La Fayette being more in unison with truth than any of the more ambitious ones. The views of birds in flight, of deer, of dogs, of wild bulls, and of athletes, were additionally interesting features of a set of photographs which seemed inexhaustible. It is good news that Mr. Muybridge contemplates some improved work next summer.

My Note Book.



THE United States ought really to feel extremely grateful for the solicitude for her artistic welfare shown by collectors in Europe. I had only just replied to an unknown correspondent in Germany who asks me, for a consideration, to assist him in carrying

out a philanthropic desire to benefit New York by promoting the sale here of his collection of old masters, when I am urged by some one else to aid in the acquirement for the Metropolitan Museum of Art of "the collection of art works, antiquities, and curios of Herr Christian Hammer, at Stockholm, Sweden." The sum asked for the latter collection is a mere trifle—only \$580,000. If we are to secure this bargain, however, we have no time to lose. It is true that "the collector and proprietor has expressed himself as preferring to send his treasures to America," but according to a writer in Truth, "the Russian Government has already made one offer, and the Herr is expecting another from England," and it is perhaps too much to hope that he will remain indifferent to the offers of perhaps millions from the effete monarchies of Europe, instead of the paltry half million—we risk knocking off the odd \$80,000—for which he may be prevailed upon to sell his collection to us because we are a republic. That "republics are ungrateful" has become a by-word and a reproach. Let us prove to Herr Christian Hammer that ours is an exception to the rule. We must not allow him to make this sacrifice.

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A NEW painting by Bouguereau has been attracting much attention at Matthew's auction rooms. It is much smaller than the "Nymphs and Satyr," now adorning an uptown bar-room; but shows no less than fifteen nude young French women who, in various playful attitudes, are disporting in a sylvan stream. Thoroughly characteristic of the artist, the figures are the perfection of grace, faultlessly modelled with impossible, bloodless flesh, the unreality being increased by the cold theatrical lighting of the picture. The work shows the perfection of technique, but not a spark of genius. It does show something, however, which is not common in Bouguereau, and that is indecent suggestion. The picture has been made thoroughly vulgar by the introduction of a peering satyr and a young man whom he is conducting, the two heads being seen through the parted foliage. It is but fair to the artist to say that these seem to be the addition of an alien hand. The picture it is said has been sold for \$15,000 and has gone to Chicago. Its destination, it is to be hoped, is some bar-room. Certainly it is the only suitable place for it.

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THE Casino—New York's newest and prettiest theatre and music hall—has been reopened with "The Queen's Lace Handkerchief," a trashy operetta by Strauss. The costumes designed by Camille Piton are excellent. When the tinselly glitter of this Moorish palace has been somewhat toned down—as happily it may be by the smoke to be introduced in the summer with the transformation of the place into a beer garden—the interior will be delightful in color.

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KURTZ'S patent apparatus for taking photographs by means of the electric light is an ingenious contrivance. You are seated at one end of a low platform, adapted to rotate on a central pivot in a socket in the floor, and the camera is placed at the other end. Then the camera and sitter, while fixed relatively to each other during the exposure of the plate, are made to revolve through an arc of a circle, whereby the shadows are softened and the light and shade are artistically distributed; or as Mr. Kurtz puts it "the sitter remains

still while the shadows of the face are moved." The whole operation is completed in a very few seconds.

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THE pictures and interesting collection of bric-à-brac belonging to Mrs. Elizabeth Murray, the accomplished water-color artist, are to be brought to New York. The recent death in Florence of this lady has been deeply deplored by the American and English residents there. Her large and beautiful studio used to be a fashionable centre for Italians and foreigners, and was looked upon almost as one of the sights of the city.

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THE insistence of Seymour Haden, in common with most modern etchers, that the plates should be destroyed after they have afforded a certain number of impressions calls to mind that this principle was earnestly combatted by the great Millet. Since 1848 he had occasionally produced an etching, and in 1868 his name is found associated with those of Jacquemart, Corot, Daubigny, Bracquemond, and Ribot in a volume published in Paris by Lemerre entitled "Sonnets et Eaux-Fortes," to which Mr. Haden also contributed. It was proposed to print 350 sets of the etchings and then destroy the plates. All the artists but Millet consented to this arrangement; but he could see in it nothing but "vandalism," and it was with difficulty that he was prevailed upon to waive his objection. He wrote to Sensier: "Between ourselves, I consider this destruction of plates most brutal and barbarous. I do not know enough about business to understand its money advantages" [I am translating the French idiom somewhat freely]; "but I know well that 'si Rembrandt et Ostade avaient fait chacun une de ces planches-la, elles seraient détruites. Assez la-dessus.'" * * *

HUFFINGTON, the print-seller, is the dealer in the spurious etchings palmed off as the work of Mr. Seymour Haden. Some of the spurious etchings at the Dolph sale at Leavitt's, a year or two ago, I am credibly informed, were to be traced to this same man.

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THE assurance of Mr. Huffington is something sublime. Recently he called upon Mr. Keppell, the agent of Mr. Haden, and invited him to buy some of the forged etchings. Mr. Keppell did so, and at once pilloried them on the walls of his shop for the benefit of his visitors. He has there the rather clever counterfeit of the "Agamemnon," such as was imposed upon the Salmagundi Club exhibition a year ago, and the very bad counterfeit of the "Shere Mill Pond." These forgeries are all made by a poor devil named Barry, who perhaps is to be more pitied than blamed.

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HENRY C. BISPHAM, who died in Rome a few weeks ago, was one of the many American painters who have gone abroad to seek the living denied them here. Ten years ago he was well known in New York studio circles as a clever animal-painter; but since he left the country he has quite dropped out of remembrance. This is generally the fate of American artists who expatriate themselves unless, indeed, they have more than ordinary talent like, for example, Mark Fisher, Hennessey or Boughton. As a rule the American artist who goes abroad does not remain. In Europe he finds the field more crowded than he imagined possible, and he returns home a sadder man, and generally a better painter. Bispham certainly profited by his opportunities for study while abroad, but he had not enough individuality to make a mark in his profession.

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ONE who knew him well writes to me as follows: "Few of the men who learn in suffering what they teach in art have ever had a temperament more tortured with the gifts and pains of genius than poor Bispham. Originally of a nervous and delicate constitution, every attainment he subsequently made in the fine arts was a draft upon his life. His first essays in animal-painting and his drawings in the sketch-book betrayed a surprising native talent. None could better sketch a lion snarling over a bone, or a pair of tigers fighting. Subsequently, he drifted almost insensibly into 'sport,' a style of art which did not develop his best powers; nor were his associations, originally those of a well-connected young man of strict training, improved among the 'horsey' companions and owners of rare cattle who surrounded his later days. Bispham continued, however, a gentleman. He was often in

Europe, receiving lessons first from Otto Weber, and later from Van Marcke. Had his frail body responded to the demands made upon it by a devouring ambition and insatiable genius, he would have lived as one of the best artists of the time. His masterwork, a trotting subject, is in the broker's office now occupying the once notorious medical basements of Mme. Restell, on Fifth Avenue."

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THE fire at the "art gallery" of Miss Sallie Gibbons, in Broadway, can hardly be regarded as a national calamity. If I remember correctly, the lady estimated her loss at about \$50,000. I wonder where she kept the valuable pictures. Those exhibited in the rooms to which the public was admitted were dreadful rubbish.

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THIS is certainly the age in France of "éditions de luxe." Perhaps the most sumptuous volume of the day—and that is saying a good deal—will be the new subscription book devoted to the French Water-Colorists, for which J. W. Bouton is now taking a good many names on the strength of the first part of the work, which he has received from the Paris publishers. This initial number, devoted to Detaille, Gustave Doré, and Louis Leloir, is profusely illustrated with photo-gravures of their works, many of which are printed with the text in colors, after the style of "L'Eventail;" and there is a profusion of autographic drawings.

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NEVER before has there been in this country so complete an exhibition of the aquafortist's art, especially in contemporary work, as that of the Philadelphia Society of Etchers. It is suggested that such exhibitions in future be made nomadic, although the loans probably could not, in all cases, be extended to other cities. The idea, however, is worth thinking over.

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MESSRS. D. F. HAYNES & CO., of Baltimore, kindly send me for notice specimens of their cream-bodied "Clifton" and "Avalon" faïence, and a colored plaque with white biscuit floral relief decoration. The pieces, on the whole, are creditable to the taste of the firm, as they certainly are to its enterprise. They mark a forward step in the application of art principles to the production of attractive ware of American manufacture for the adornment of the average home. So much can be said with truth. But I do not find myself able to accord to the ware the unstinted praise contained in a letter to Messrs. Haynes & Co. (who publish it as a circular) from Mr. William C. Prime, albeit they gratefully declare that gentleman to be "the best authority on pottery in America." In the pieces of "Clifton" ware before me, the body is solid, the glaze is excellent, and the brilliant majolica-like decoration is suitable; although in regard to the latter I would suggest that the imitation blue ribbon around the neck of the vase is not in particularly good taste. The specimens of "Avalon faïence" are better in form than in decoration, which I find rather tawdry.

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THE white biscuit ornamentation on the Wedgwood-blue ground of the plaque is probably the best thing of the kind yet produced in this country. But to compare it to the best work of the sort ever done in Europe, and that, too, to the disadvantage of the latter—as Mr. Prime is rash enough to do—is really absurd. Compared with those of some of the delicate "articles de Saxe" of the last century, the roses and pinks on this plaque are as the flowers a cook cuts from a turnip compared with those from the hand of nature. Such ill-considered praise of course cannot possibly redound to the credit of any one concerned in it. By the way, do Messrs. D. F. Haynes & Co. think it exactly honorable to call their ware "Avalon faïence" when the name sounds so like "Haviland faïence" that it is pretty sure to mislead some buyers who have never seen the later, but only know it by name. I must say that in the ware itself there is no deception; for it is not made to look at all like the Haviland faïence.

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CLARK MILLS, the sculptor, whose death has been long expected, has gone at last. He was an estimable man in private life, but it cannot truthfully be said that art suffers by his departure. His equestrian statue of Jackson in Washington, cast from cannon captured by that general, cost the nation \$70,000, and is a standing proof of the bad taste and extravagance of our national

legislature. New Orleans has a duplicate of this wretched monument. Charleston rejoices in a marble bust of John C. Calhoun from the same hands. Verily, "the evil that men do lives after them, the good is often interred with their bones."

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MR. BELT, the fashionable London sculptor, has won his suit for slander against Mr. Lawes for the full amount of his claim for damages—\$25,000. But artists of reputation, who have compared the sculpture he sold as that of his own hands with the bust he modelled in court to prove his ability, are unanimous in the opinion that he must have received valuable assistance in the production of the former, which shows artistic qualities entirely lacking in the other. The presiding judge evinced a childish delight at seeing a likeness in clay made almost under his eyes, and joined in the injudicious applause of the audience when the bust was brought from the ante-room for the inspection of the jury. He charged directly for the plaintiff, and one is not surprised to learn that permission for a new trial has been granted. One may be a profound jurist and at the same time a very bad judge of a "mud-head," as our own lamented Lincoln used to call a bust in clay.

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THE reproduction by the heliogravure process of the set of panel paintings by Hans Makart, called "The Five Senses," will doubtless have a popular success, although the pictures will hardly enhance the artist's reputation. There are five single female figures, more or less nude, each posed to show to the best advantage the graceful lines of the body. In "Taste" we have a three-quarter back view of a woman plucking apples from a bough. The effect of the sunlight filtering through the leaves on to her arms is reproduced with much delicacy. "Smell" shows a three-quarter front view of a woman, somewhat too much posed, holding to her nose a festoon of roses suspended above her. "Hearing," a woman attentively listening to some sound in the woods, is far from successful in execution. The modelling of the legs and the left hand is flat, and the whole plate suggests much alteration from the original photograph. "Feeling" is a back view of a mother with an infant on her shoulder. The excuse for the title is hardly apparent. "Sight" shows a beautiful young woman intently regarding herself in a small hand mirror. If the whole series were simply called studies from the life model, which they evidently are, there would be less occasion for criticism. Mr. J. W. Bouton is the American agent for the publication.

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A GROUP of French artists and amateurs have just formed a society to hold "conferences" every Sunday in the Louvre, and their proposition has been accepted with pleasure by the Minister of Arts. "Suppose," writes a correspondent, "a society of American artists were to ask of the directors of the Metropolitan Museum permission to do such a thing!" Shocking!

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AT the recent Salmagundi exhibition at the Academy, two Richeton etchings, placed on either side of one of Bicknell's monotypes, served a useful purpose in showing how very thin and poor is the result of this nondescript "art" compared with that of the honest work of the needle. The monotype is a pretentious absurdity. At best it is but a lifeless shadow—a tricky subterfuge. The more I see of it the better satisfied I am that it can have no legitimate place among the graphic arts.

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THE case of Feuardent versus Cesnola was called in the United States Circuit Court on January 16th, and set down peremptorily for trial for the first week in March. This is the libel suit for \$25,000 which the reader may have seen mentioned in the course of the past two years. The longer the delay, the more complete becomes the evidence against the disgraced director. Referring to the review of Ceccaldi's book on Cyprus in the last number of THE ART AMATEUR, in which it was shown that three statues or parts of statues, claimed by Cesnola as his discoveries and so pictured in his "Cyprus," were really found by Ceccaldi, I am able to add a new piece of testimony. I hear from Paris that the two statues, numbered 3 and 5 on page 52 of this magazine, are both to be seen in the Louvre, having been bought from Count Tiburce Ceccaldi, who found them at Tricomo in 1869.

MONTEZUMA,